

GENERAL FINDINGS - OPC

A. Approval and implementation of OPC projects follow the general patterns outlined below:

1. Budget Estimates

OPC prepares a budget estimate for each fiscal year. The total estimate, based upon the proposed missions of the geographic areas and separate activities of OPC, is submitted to the PRC and DCI for approval, and is defended by OPC before these officials. The estimate approved is submitted to the Bureau of the Budget as part of the over-all Agency budget. OPC interprets this approval to be final approval to expend the funds that are made available. OPC does not, however, (as does OSO) interpret that approval to expend such funds constitutes prior approval for the detailed activity itself. The total OPC allocation for a fiscal year is sub-allocated by the ADPC to the individual OPC components. These components initiate and plan projects which, prior to expenditure of funds, are submitted to the PRC or DCI for approval of the activity itself. If approval is given, then available OPC funds may be expended.

2. OPC Processing of Projects

The internal processing of projects within OPC is generally similar to the practices employed by OSO. OPC has begun recently to use a "program" approach in its planning which is similar to the "basic plan" approach of OSO. Most OPC projects and programs, however, are submitted to the PRC for approval prior to implementation. Some differences occur through differing interpretations of what is "approval". Projects involving less than \$25,000 are submitted generally to the DD/P for approval while those above \$25,000 are submitted to the full PRC for recommendation and DCI approval. The PRC has approved several programs submitted by OPC. This approval, however, has been conditional with final approval resting upon submission of detailed plans of the specific projects involved. OPC generally feels the monetary criterion for submission of projects is too artificial. OPC adheres rather closely to the prescriptions of Regulation which establishes PRC policy. The major problem has been in interpreting the intent and requirements set forth in that Regulation.

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3. OPC Appraisal of Practices

OPC generally would prefer greater autonomy and flexibility. There was the expressed feeling that the present system of submission of all projects to the PRC is unnecessarily restrictive, and that OPC is today capable of operating in a manner more nearly similar to that employed by OSO.

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B. Conclusions

1. Although OPC very nearly follows the letter of current Regulations, those Regulations have been given varying interpretations to the extent that there exists no certainty concerning exact meanings and intent.
2. Regulations should be revised to provide usable procedures and criteria by which projects might be processed and approved.

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